

## **Program for Dietetic Interns (PDI)**

### **Preceptor Selection and Evaluation Policy and Procedure**

Policy: The PDI will assure that adequate and appropriate preceptors are selected to provide supervised practice experiences for interns and evaluated regularly.

Procedure: Preceptors will be selected using established criteria and their performance will be evaluated regularly using a standard process.

The following criteria will be used to select preceptors:

1. Licensed RD with at least 1 year of experience for clinical rotations. For community and management/foodservice rotations the preceptor must have a professional degree or certification in an appropriate field with 1 year of experience or equivalent work experience without degree or certification. When the community rotation preceptor is a Licensed RD, it is preferred they have at least 1 year of experience.
2. Prospective preceptor must have a good reputation within their field of expertise as evidenced by past performance and verification from supervisor/manager/director/co-workers. This may be determined by prior knowledge of the individual requesting to be a preceptor, e.g., former intern with known qualities that would make the person a good preceptor; professional knowledge of the person (from working with them in the Missouri Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (or local dietetic association); professional knowledge of the person by a state WIC nutritionist; recommendation from another internship director whose interns go to that site; or recommendation from another preceptor.
3. Prospective preceptors must be committed to their own lifelong learning. Their resumes should document that they regularly participate in appropriate professional development programs and training.
4. Prospective preceptor must demonstrate the desire to take on the extra responsibility of interns including-review of competencies and assignments, teaching classes, evaluations, and excellent time management skills.
5. Prospective preceptor must demonstrate excellent communication skills orally and in writing and collaborate with PDI director or Dietetic Student Education Coordinator on a continual basis.
6. Prospective preceptor must demonstrate excellent people skills and have patience, understanding and time to teach interns the needed knowledge and skills.
7. Prospective preceptor must support Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) changes and practice standards with the preference for all preceptors to be AND members.

The following process will be used to select preceptors:

1. Individuals interested in being a PDI preceptor must complete an application and submit it to the PDI director. A current resume that indicates education and work history must be included with the application.
2. Applications are reviewed by the PDI director and dietetic student education coordinator. Only those applicants that meet the criteria will be considered to be preceptors.
3. Once an application is accepted, either the PDI director or the dietetic student education coordinator will contact the prospective preceptor to further describe responsibilities and answer questions in order to ensure the prospective preceptor is interested and committed to working with the program.
4. Before a new primary preceptor begins taking interns the program director or dietetic student education coordinator talks with that individual, reviews the procedures, reviewing applicable competencies, discusses usual practice and what to expect and answers additional questions.
5. Once a preceptor is chosen that fits the above criteria they are given a trial period through two intern classes. Based on the evaluations and feedback from interns and communication or issues that may have arisen a determination is made as to whether this preceptor will be allowed to continue providing experiences to interns.

The following process will be used to evaluate preceptors:

1. Interns are encouraged to bring any concerns or issues with a preceptor(s) to the attention of the Dietetic Student Education Coordinator and/or Program Director immediately to be addressed at that time rather than waiting until the end of the rotation.
2. At the end of a rotation, interns will evaluate each rotation preceptor on the following criteria using a rating scale of 5=Excellent 4=Good 3=Average 2=Fair 1=Poor.

Is Organized and Focused:

Pre-planned learning activities

Prepared for precepting activities

On time for precepting activities

Took the time to explain concepts fully and clearly

Careful and precise in answering questions

Summarized major learning points

Focused on the identified learning objectives/orientation to the area, experiences, assignments

Identified what was considered most important

Values Intern-Preceptor Interactions:

Encouraged discussion

Invited intern to share knowledge, experiences, and opinions

Welcomed and encouraged questions

Used eye-contact with intern

Clarified thinking by identifying reasons for questions  
Intern could tell if the preceptor understood them or  
Had interest and concern in the quality of their precepting  
Encouraged active learning, that is, the intern was involved and engaged rather than simply observing  
Gave intern enough independence in experience and allowed intern to be self-directed

Is Dynamic and Enthusiastic:

Enthusiastic about their professional responsibilities, including precepting  
Varied the speed and tone of their voice  
Used humor appropriately with intern  
Had an interesting style of presentation / teaching

Relates Well to Interns:

Had a genuine interest in intern  
Respected intern as a person  
Attempted to relate to intern as an individual  
Adapted to the differences in individual interns  
Was valued for advice beyond that directly related to the supervised practice experience  
Was accessible to interns  
Was approachable and friendly

Uses an Analytical Approach

Discussed recent developments in the field  
Discussed points of view other than their own  
Shared the origins of their ideas and concepts  
Provided references for interesting and involved points  
Explained why the intern's work was correct or incorrect  
Had intern apply concepts to demonstrate understanding  
Provided constructive and timely feedback on areas of strength in addition to areas for improvement

Is Competent and Confident

Demonstrated mastery in the area in which they are precepting  
Keeps up-to-date in the area in which they are precepting  
Confident in their expertise in the area in which they are precepting  
Confident in their skill as preceptor  
Provided experiences/assignments that were valuable in your learning process

Models Professional Behavior

Showed respect for others  
Demonstrated empathy for others  
Took responsibility for their actions  
Recognized their own limitations

3. Preceptors must maintain an overall “excellent” or “good” rating by interns in order to remain with our program.
4. If a preceptor is rated overall as average or less by an intern, either the Program Director and/or Dietetic Student Education Coordinator will talk with the intern to ascertain more specific reasons why the preceptor received such a low rating.
5. Should the outcome of the discussion with the intern indicate an overall concern or question as to the capability of the preceptor to adequately function in this role, the Program Director and/or Dietetic Student Education Coordinator will meet with the preceptor for further discussion. Based on the outcome of the meeting a decision will be made as to whether the preceptor should be retained.
6. Should a preceptor receive low ratings by multiple interns, the Program Director and/or Dietetic Student Education Coordinator will meet with the primary preceptor to determine the preceptor’s capability to be a successful preceptor and whether the preceptor should be retained.